

Churches Together in Barnstaple Constitution

Vision

For a network of churches in Barnstaple, relating and working together, to facilitate Christians to serve and pray for their town for its transformation.

Affiliation

Churches Together in Barnstaple will be affiliated to Churches Together in Devon.

Basis

Churches Together in Barnstaple unites in pilgrimage those Churches in Barnstaple Town and neighbouring Parishes which, acknowledging God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit, commit themselves:

- to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and
- to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Aims

1. To enable Barnstaple churches to relate to one another and be a visible sign of Christian unity.
2. To work together to proclaim the Gospel and make the love of Jesus known.
3. To encourage the sharing of resources between the churches.
4. To be a forum for churches to discuss common interests, exchange information and raise issues of concern.
5. To enable Churches to have a united voice into the media and various strategic partnerships.
6. To facilitate interaction between the churches of Barnstaple and the town's civic authorities and organisations.
7. To relate to other Churches Together groups in North Devon

Structure

Churches Together in Barnstaple shall be a network of churches. There will be a Representatives Group and from its ranks an elected Enabling Group. Non credal groups or Christian agencies may be invited to join Churches Together in Barnstaple and to appoint two members to belong to the Representatives Group. All members of the Representatives Group will be eligible to be elected to the Enabling Group.

Representatives Group and Enabling Group

The Representatives Group shall consist of the lead clergy, minister or representative from each church and if possible one other appointed from each participating church. After the first Annual Meeting this group will elect annually from their number between 6 and 12 individuals to serve as the Enabling Group with the option for that group to co-opt a maximum of 2 other individuals to support their work. These should aim to achieve a good balance between denominations, age groups and gender. Before the first Annual Meeting the Representatives Group will be the Enabling Group.

The Enabling Group will be accountable to the Representatives Group and may be dismissed or have its decisions overridden by them. A full meeting of representatives shall be called if

deemed necessary by the majority of lead clergy / ministers / representatives.

The Representatives Group will meet at least twice a year. The quorum for all elections or decisions shall be one third of the membership of the relevant group.

The Enabling Group should normally meet separately at least four times a year and will:

1. Be responsible for ensuring good communication between the member churches and to Christian agencies and other local Christian groups.
2. Work on behalf of all churches on town issues and events.
3. Enable town-wide worship, witness or service when appropriate.
4. Speak to town government, agencies, the media and organisations on behalf of the churches.
5. Set up task groups to work on town projects or initiatives.
6. Appoint a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer from among its members to normally serve a one-year term of office.

Annual Meeting

Each year the Representatives Group will hold an open annual meeting at which the Enabling Group will report on the work and suggest goals for the next year.

This meeting will receive inspected annual accounts and appoint an inspector for accounts for the following financial year (April-March).

Amendments to Constitution

Any amendment to the constitution can only be agreed if three quarters of the Representatives Group present at the meeting approve it.

Agreed note: The Religious Society of Friends, although they do not accept any formal credal statement, nevertheless is a welcome and equal member of Churches Together in Barnstaple.

ENDS